

## **Summary of Major Themes from 1/5/10 SRP Strategic Planning Information Session**

The following is a summary of the major points raised during the information session:

**Questions 1 & 2. What scientific themes and issues are the most important to address in the SF Research Program and why?**

**What prioritization criteria should SRP use to guide inclusion of themes and issues in program activities?**

**What are the key teams and disciplines needed for the SRP to make the greatest advances in scientific themes and issues most important to the Program?**

There were a couple questions regarding the SRP's annual funding flexibility. This related to the ability of the program to make incremental changes related to the fraction of the annual \$50 million in funding that could be available for new program funding in any given fiscal year.

One commenter proposed that SRP could focus more on non-biomedical research such as remediation of waste and improved technologies for waste sites cleanup.

Another commenter raised the general issue of the relationship/familiarity between the SRP research portfolio and the rest of the NIEHS DERT biomedical research portfolio.

One commenter raised a key issue of how SRP can take the lead in bringing the results of basic research to application as hazardous waste sites. This is often difficult because researchers are using such different (lower) dose levels than are experience at sites.

Another commenter was interested if SRP was able to initially "start small", focusing on a basic biomedical research area, and then "growing" the research to a broader application to human health at a hazardous site level.

Another commenter asked whether SRP had the statutory authority to address emerging contaminants that were not on one of the EPA regulatory chemical lists such as under the Clean Water Act. (The response was that the CERCLA/SARA statute allows broad flexibility to address the full range of contaminants with very few restrictions.)

Another commenter noted that SRP has done a good job in addressing emerging chemicals and nanotechnology as well as recalcitrant environmental problems such as complex mixtures and varying human vulnerabilities.

**Question 3. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the SRP, is the current biomedical/non-biomedical framework the most effective approach? Why or why not?**

One commenter noted that the interdisciplinary nature of the SRP was unique in NIEHS, and that it offered a very valuable role in forcing interdisciplinary interaction among research scientists

It was also noted that most major public health/environmental issues faced by the SRP were interdisciplinary in nature.

**Question 4. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the SRP, what approaches to training are most appropriate for the SRP to meet its research mandates?**

One commenter noted that the best part of the SRP training program was the opportunity that it offered for the bio-medical and non-biomedical graduate students to get together and discuss possible collaborations. That would only happen in SRP.

SRP multidisciplinary training requirement also stimulates undergraduate students to go on into broad environmental health field.

The SRP has more flexibility to use training resources to cut across so many disciplines.

The SRP has to deal with university discipline departments that do not award interdisciplinary research and are a barrier to encouraging interdisciplinary approaches.

A Question was raised whether the SRP fund individual fellowship applications that come into the NIEHS?

Another Commenter proposed that SRP should focus on SRP staying in touch with SRP alumnae by promoting alumnae groups perhaps using newer social media tools.

**Question 5. Who are or should be SRP's stakeholders?**

**How can SRP most effectively receive input from them?**

How much coordination is there across stakeholder groups such as other agencies? Can SRP spearhead across agencies, across divisions to promote the mission to collaborate on science needs and results and avoid overlap (Nigel)?

Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) is a key stakeholder group for SRP.

**Question 6. What are the best ways for SRP to achieve its goals of research translation that is, making research more accessible by end-users?**

**What data sharing tools or procedures should SRP use?**

One commenter emphasized that research translation is integral to the research program and should therefore be integrated into the total research portfolio.

Another commenter noted the emphasis that was put on RT by the External Advisory Panel and so the SRP should promote a full dialogue with its stakeholder community to ensure that its research is useful.

**Question 7. What are the most appropriate approaches to community outreach for SRP?**

One commenter observed that there is a continuing need for interaction with local communities.

**Question 8. What research team structure(s) and/or disciplines are needed to make the greatest advances in SRP Program mandates?**

The current 2 biomedical /2 non-biomedical cores structure (for P-42 grants) is good, and allows an appropriate level of program flexibility.

SRP's use of ARRA stimulus funds was good to encourage inter-program coordination. This allows SRP programs to promote synergism. It could become part of the basic program.